Rural Tourism: Sustainable Tourism and Certification

'Action to improve environmental performance and to reduce the carbon footprint of the tourism industry will result in significant cost savings for individual businesses'
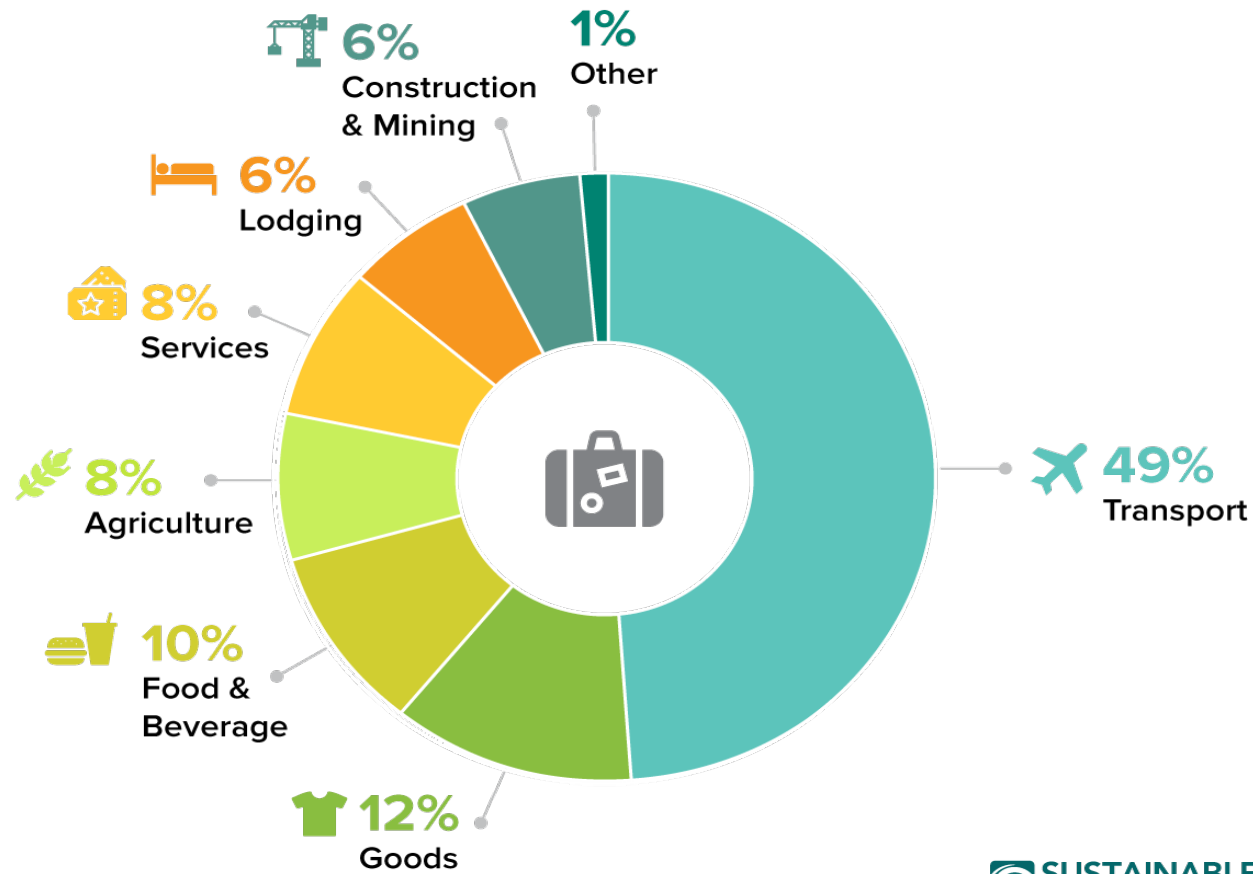
RURAL FEMMES
ERASMUS+ PROGRAM

MTU
Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta na Mumhan
Munster Technological University

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Climate change

- Man-made emissions of greenhouse gases (from activities such as burning fossil fuels for energy, transport and heating), **are driving** climate change.

- All stakeholders need to adopt measures to mitigate climate change.

Carbon Footprint of Global Tourism

- 6% Construction & Mining
- 1% Other
- 6% Lodging
- 8% Services
- 8% Agriculture
- 10% Food & Beverage
- 12% Goods
- 49% Transport

SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL INTERNATIONAL

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What is Sustainable Tourism?

"Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities" (United Nations World Tourism Organisation).

Creating Sustainable Tourism (State)

▶ Reduction of 40% of 1990 levels by 2030. In 2020 this target was updated to 55% by the EU.

▶ Ireland is not on track to meet their targets.

▶ The longer we take to reduce our emissions, the harder (and more expensive) it becomes to achieve our goals.

▶ The *Change* campaign website (www.change.ie)

    ▶ How did it all begin?

    ▶ How does it affect me?

    ▶ What's being done?

    ▶ Down to green business******* (Agriculture, forestry, tourism…)

    ▶ Carbon calculator tools

    ▶ Change for kids
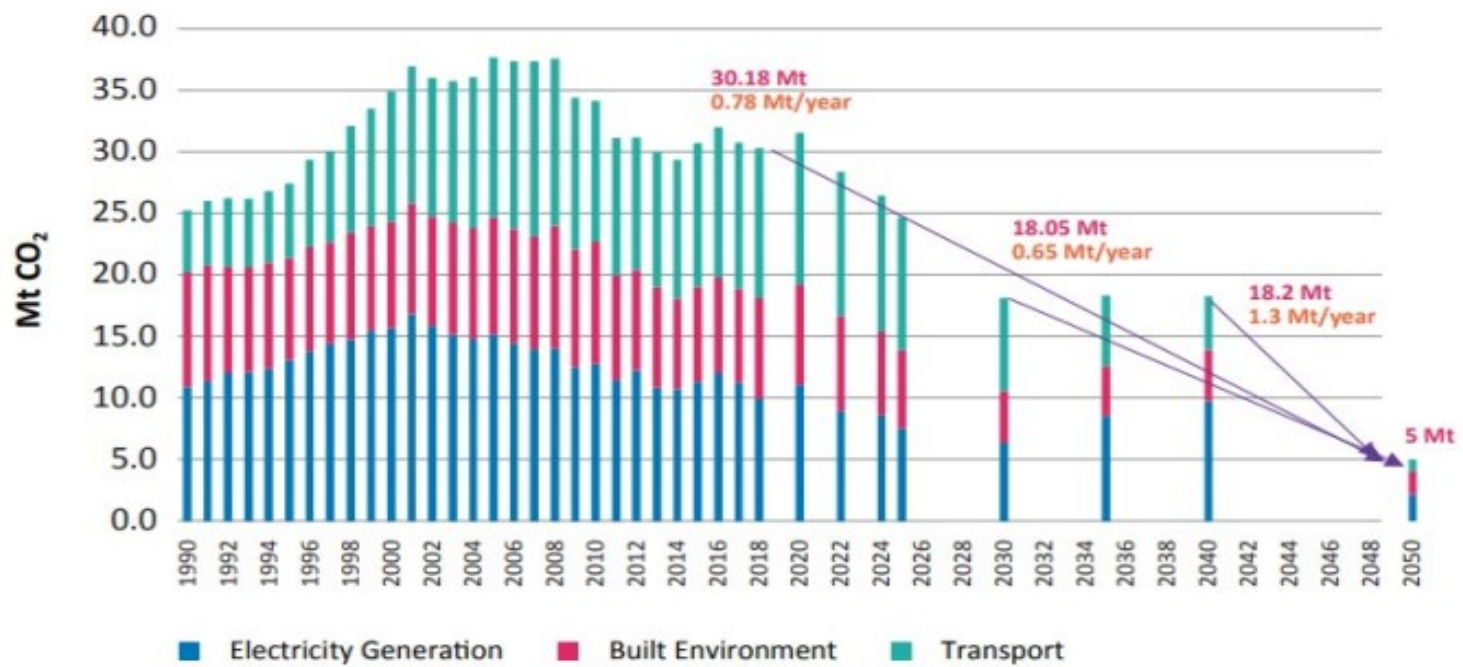
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Sustainable Tourism: *People, Place and Policy – Growing Tourism to 2025*

► 1. Assess the impact of climate change on the tourism industry

► 2. Assess the impact on tourism of any measures proposed to tackle climate change

► 3. Contribute to the Government‟s *Change* campaign

► 4. Measure and reduce the carbon footprint of the tourism industry

► 5. Communicate the challenges to the industry and raise awareness

► 6. Offer our visitors a low-emissions choice

► 7. Manage Fáilte Ireland's own emissions

What does this mean for funding? Capital investment in tourism will be designed so that funded projects comply with European and national environmental regulations

Creating Sustainable Tourism (Tourism Businesses)

Improve environmental performance:

reducing energy consumption ➡ **accredited ecotourism businesses**

- Waste: reduce, reuse and recycle waste.

- Water: water metering, low flush toilets, installation of water tanks to generate own water supply…

- Energy: sustainable energy technologies such as woodpellet boilers, solar panels for hot water, or improvement of building insulation.

- Materials: Sourcing sustainably produced, local building materials and goods.

Sustainable Travel Ireland (benefits for certification)

- ▶ To promote your responsible tourism credentials.

- ▶ To operate in a confident, professional and audited way and not to simply 'green washing'.

- ▶ To highlight the efforts of being actively engaged with sustainability.

- ▶ Competitive Edge: Being ahead of the game.

Green Business Initiatives

ISO 14001

The International Standards Organisation (ISO) has developed the international standard for Environmental Management – the ISO 14001. The ISO 14001 provides organisations with a structure to establish policy, develop and implement an efficient EMS, and to comply with environmental legislation. In Ireland, the National Standards Authority is responsible for accreditation to ISO 14001.

EMAS (The European Eco Management & Audit Scheme)

The EMAS is similar to the ISO 14001 but is for use in the EU only. Participating organisations must implement an EMS, commit to continual improvement and report on performance for verification. The Irish National Accreditation Board is the competent body responsible for EMAS in Ireland .

Green Business Initiatives

The 'EU Flower' Eco-Label

This European eco-label signifies high environmental performance in all kinds of tourist accommodation services. To obtain this certification, accommodation providers must meet key criteria relating to implementing measures on water saving, energy efficiency, renewable energy, waste separation and disposal, reduced usage of chemical substances and environmental communication and education.

Leave No Trace

This is an outdoor ethics programme designed to promote responsible outdoor recreational behaviour through a series of 7 principles. This programme applies to all outdoor (non-motorised) activities. Any centre or facility which displays this logo has signed up to this programme and promotes and supports the 7 principles of Leave No Trace. To log on to the Leave No Trace website click here.

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Green Hospitality

- ► To support the industry in continually minimising their impact on the environment

- ► To provide both certification and recognition programmes

- ► To provide direct resource efficiency support.

- ► Case studies on minimization of energy, water, waste, green procurement costs and general (check them out!)

- ► Hospitality businesses

- ► Tourists (domestic and international), Leisure or Business (www.greentravel.ie)

- ► Suppliers

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Sustainable Travel Ireland

▶ Training and certifying businesses since 2009.

▶ Internationally certification standards recognised by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC).

▶ Independent auditors:

    ▶ Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

    ▶ National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI)

    ▶ Department of Agriculture & Rural Development (DARD)

    ▶ National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS).

▶ Imke Range, Lead Sustainability Trainer

Creating a Sustainable Mindset

► What do you think a sustainable mindset entails?

► What can you do to improve the environment, to reduce our carbon footprint as an individual, as a family, as a member of the community?